# Letters from our readers

**30 June 2011**

On *"Police crack down on two strikes in China"*

Thank you for your excellent article. The cruelty and anti-humanism at the core of Stalinism are dramatically represented in your agile reporting of events. We have to give the message that only the SEP's political perspective can redeem humanity in this hour of tragedy.

IVE
Sri Lanka
27 June 2011

On *"Trade union-based NDP facilitates passage of striking-breaking law"*

Keith Jones' article provides a textbook example of what I like to think of as "Modern Strikebreaking 101." It describes the strategies used by the bourgeoisie and their political agents in Parliament and in the union leadership to attack workers and degrade their living standards. I would divide these strategies into four distinct steps:

Step One: Isolate the strike action. As the article noted, the union leadership did nothing to integrate the striking workers' struggle into part of a broader industrial and political offensive. The old adage "divide and conquer" comes to mind. In short, the leadership effectively guaranteed that their striking members would be pushovers. And when workers can't use their strength in numbers they become easy prey to the bourgeois carnivores.

Step Two: Render the strike ineffectual. Not only were the strikers isolated, but the campaign of localized rotating strikes was essentially busy-work, something for members to do during negotiations. It gave the appearance of a struggle without an actual struggle. The CUPW leadership was proud of this stage-managed political theatre, and often boasted about the campaign's lack of impact on Canada Post's operations. Hey workers! Too bad about the concessions, but at least you all avoided a nasty fight—whew!

Step Three: Don't plan for any worst-case scenarios. As the article notes, the union studiously avoided any discussion of what postal workers should do when the government intervened directly in support of the concession demands of a company of which they are the boss and sole shareholder. Union leaders, and their Alfred E. Neuman/"what—me worry?" approach to planning, assured the strike would collapse at the slightest pressure.

Step Four: Take cover! Or more specifically, get your political allies to provide political cover. While the NDP and CLC decried the back to work legislation, postured and filibustered, at the end of the day they all agreed that not much more could be done. So there—it's unanimous. Nothing more could be done, end of story. Now get back to work.

In short, I think it is time for CUPW workers to fire their leadership. As far as a strike goes, I can't think of an absolutely worse outcome—getting and settling for less than what the company originally offered? Pure incompetence!

But it's worse than that. The union leadership works against the rank and file workers' political and economic interests. I think workers would be better off organizing and leading themselves. They certainly couldn't be any worse than their current leader-weasels. And if history is any guide, amazing and revolutionary things happen when the workers take over!

Dan

27 June 2011

On *"Twenty years after the dissolution of Yugoslavia: Slovenia's government in crisis"*

A fine analysis of the political world of Slovenia. If we keep in mind that it is historically the richest and most developed part of former Yugoslavia, we can surmise the plight of the less developed regions. (Before the breakup, in the late 1980s, it was said that per capita income in Slovenia was 20 times that of Kosovo, the poorest province.)

Only couple of days ago I've read a study called "Public Opinion—20 years later", a joint effort by Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian media. It also surveyed Bosnia and Herzegovina and reports that overwhelming majority in all four republics thinks their living conditions now are worse than in Yugoslavia more than 2 decades ago.

While utopian nostalgia can partially account for the sentiment, that most people, even in richest republics, are feeling this way is reflective of the deplorable social conditions prevailing throughout the Balkans after forcible reintroduction of capitalism 20 years ago. The so-called independent statelets that sprung up in no way secured even the basic democratic rights of the populace. The emancipation of the Balkan peoples will come about only through fight for international socialism and socialist Balkan federation and against local (and international) bourgeois exploiters.

Ante
27 June 2011

On *"Journalist Robert Fisk faces libel action for pointing out Bahrain-Saudi alliance"*

Mr. Fisk is the last valiant romantic of international journalism. His unbiased reports, truth and only truth hurts many trigger-happy potentates and pseudo-democrats. He is the only Western reporter who responded to my open letter to Mr. Blair and others after the bombardment of Kosovo and Belgrade, including our residential community.

Ljubnko
Serbia

27 June 2011

On *"Arthur Ransome and the Bolshevik Revolution"*

I would like to say I have read all three parts of the history and role played by Arthur Ransome with some keen interest.

And despite the lies that have been written by other biographers on the role he played, many valuable lessons must be learned from this by workers and comrades alike.

For me it has encouraged me to read more of the events of 1917 and to understand the consequences of the period and the impact that it has had on my life and millions of people around the world. History is clearly important in understanding the lessons of the future.

As the author said, Ransome was incapable of not telling the truth, the Bolsheviks knew this and the British establishment knew this. However, the truth favoured the Bolsheviks and not the British establishment.

Malcolm B
28 June 2011

On *"Incendies: Trauma and tragedy in the Middle East"*

Thanks for this very effective review of a very good but flawed film—flawed in the ways you clearly point out.

Susan C
Montreal, Canada
28 June 2011

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**wsws.org/contact**